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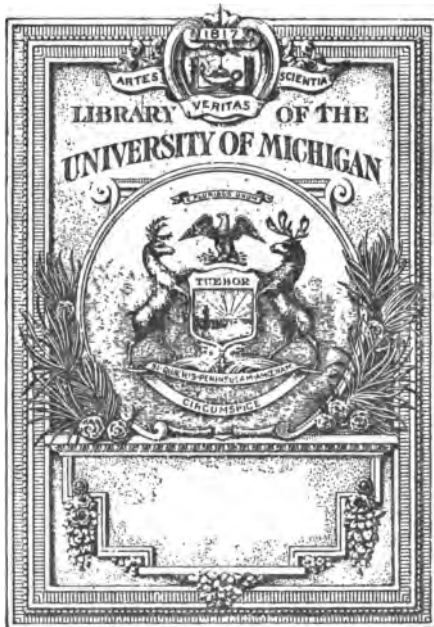
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ORATION

DELIVERED ON THE

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

South Carolina Historical Society,

AT

HIBERNIAN HALL, IN CHARLESTON.

ON

WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 23, 1860.

BY

THOMAS M. HANCKEL.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.

CHARLESTON:

PRINTED BY WALKER, EVANS & CO.,

3 Broad and 101 East Bay Streets.

1860.





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ORATION.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:

Although the human mind is an organism so nicely adjusted, that, I suppose, it would be impossible to deprive it of even the least of its powers without crippling the whole intellectual man, yet of all the faculties which compose its wonderful structure, I think there is no one so necessary to its healthful life, and its vigorous action, as the power of memory. And this not only because without any memory at all, the immediate and momentary perceptions of our senses would be the whole sum of human existence, and we would stand upon a narrow strip of life, speechless, thoughtless, and almost soulless, while each passing moment would draw behind us an impenetrable veil of oblivion, cutting us off from all knowledge of the past, and, in consequence, from all expectation of the future, and leaving us the miserable slaves of accident and the rudest mechanism of the senses; not only because without a vigorous memory, there could be no accurate perception of differences, and therefore no analysis, and no correct comparison of ideas, and no clear knowledge of their relations, and, therefore, no process of reasoning, and no swift deduction from premises to conclusions; not only because, under the system of philosophy taught by the inductive science of modern times, it is from the storehouse of a laborious experience, and a full and abundant memory, that we draw all that wealth of knowledge which is the magnificent endowment of our age; but because memory enters into the essential elements of our existence, and wields an influence over the life, the character, and the affections, which may not be so obvious, but is of incalculable importance. For, while it is from the memory

that we derive our knowledge of duration, it is through the memory also that our human life is grafted upon eternity, and by its vital power that this life progresses with the infinite. And as the highest evidence we possess of the soul's immaterial existence is, I think, to be found in the memory, and memory is, I believe, a true spiritual sense, corresponding to the senses of the body, and attests to our consciousness the presence of the ideal world, as fully and as truly as do the bodily senses attest the existence of the world of matter, so it is memory which defines our individuality, and determines our identity, and is the native region and the genial atmosphere of our ideal and spiritual life. Memory is also the source of all moral responsibility, and a necessary element of all moral character, and the foundation of all our bodily and mental habits; and with the loss of memory, the soul would lose its sense of accountability, and its appreciation of moral beauty, the mind would lose all its habits of perception and thought, the tongue would cleave to the roof of the mouth, and the right hand would forget its cunning.

But in nothing is the power of memory displayed in a higher degree than in its control over the affections—the highest and the noblest portion of our nature. Nothing which is not long remembered affects us deeply. For that which is easily forgotten is never incorporated with our inner life, and is never grasped by our sympathies, and the fleeting smiles and tears of childhood's brief memories are a proverb. That, therefore, is a false and shallow philosophy, which exclaims, "Let the dead past bury its dead." How can that be called a dead past, which is quick with the vitality of our spiritual life, and with the strength of our individual natures and affections, which determines our identity, and defines our individuality, and by whose fruitful power memories have formed themselves into habits, and habits have become consolidated into character. This engrossing devotion to the present may, indeed, bring a flushing of the blood and an energy of the nerves, resulting in a restless activity. But if actions which go freighted with thought and an earnest purpose, find a surer haven and bring a larger blessing, and words, and thoughts, and deeds, spoken and done with fitness, like seeds sown in their native soil and in a genial season, yield a larger and a better harvest, then may we well look to the past for its lessons and its guidance.

And what thoughtful and earnest man would forget or neglect

the past? Who would forget his pure, and peaceful, and happy hours, and all the glory of his life? He would as soon close his eyes to the glad sunshine and rejoicing nature. Who has not known the griefs and the desolations of life? Who has not felt, with Tennyson at the sea-washed grave of his friend,

"And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, oh sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Can never come back to me."

Yet who would forget his sorrows? For our sorrows flow from our affections; and our affections are our noblest and most precious life, and as dear as life itself. And we would as soon destroy our bodies, because they are the sources of pain as well as of pleasure, as commit the spiritual suicide of forgetfulness. Who does not feel that his griefs have linked him with the ideal and the immortal? Who will not say with the poet,

"Ah! sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,
Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
'Behold the man who loved and lost,
But all he was is overworn.'"

Who would forget his errors and his follies, his humiliating errors and his sad mistakes, if he remembers them with a brave spirit and an intelligent purpose? Who would forget them, unless he is willing to forfeit the moral endowments of his nature, and forget that he is a responsible being, capable of appreciating what is noble, and pure, and holy? What lessons may they not teach us—lessons of humility, lessons of caution, lessons of mercy, lessons of an abiding faith in the inflexible laws of life, and the moral government of heaven.

Indeed, so great and inestimable is the power of memory, and so close and intimate the connection between the past and the present, that I think there can be no healthful or valuable development of our mental and moral nature and activity, which is not the logical sequence of the past; in which the offices of life are not assumed with a due regard to the training of

the past, in which the duties of life are not performed with a just consideration of the relations of the past, where a great benefit does not receive an overflowing measure of gratitude, and a great wrong is not followed by a great repentance and a great conquest over evil, and so on through all the expressions of our nature.

And the great and crowning work of the Christian faith has been this: that it has enabled sorrowful, erring, and guilty men to face the past; to face it, indeed, with bowed heads and stricken hearts, but still to face the irrevocable past, with the light of its truths interpreting its lessons, with its offers of pardon dispelling its gloom, with its supernatural strength giving life and energy to the present, and with its wonderful promises controlling the future.

Memory then, is, indeed, that golden bowl which gathers the precious drops of life, and which carries and preserves forever, the essential qualities of our intellectual and moral character. It is, indeed, that silver cord, as slight as fancy, but as bright as thought, and as strong as life, which, beginning with the first look of love which the nursing infant lifts to its mother's face, entwines itself with the whole growth of existence and the progress of time, binding together thought with thought, feeling with feeling, action with action, in the indestructible unity of an individual life, in the complete development of an individual nature, in the inextricable responsibility of an individual character, until, to human eyes, it is lost in the grave, and "the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken," and the spirit returns to its Maker.

And what memory is to the individual, history is to a nation. That a people should have any history at all, that there should be acts and events, passions and agitations, social interests and political powers, which reach, in their influence and effects, to the limits of a certain country, and there sharply cease, powerfully affecting this people, yet touching no other, is the highest evidence they can have of their national existence. And it is equally true, that a people without a history—without any record of their civil organization and political action, whether this record be in oral traditions, or in written documents—cannot be said to have any national life whatever. They would represent but a noisy, thoughtless and aimless rabble, or at best, a fluctuating and capricious band of savages; for the

bond of all society is sympathy. And the thoughts and the feelings of men live in their actions more than in language itself—more than in anything else. United action becomes, therefore, the highest source of sympathy. And the history of a people is both the record and the evidence of their united action, and, therefore, the true representative of their national life. The construction of society and government is not a work of human choice and wisdom, but is the result of historical necessity. And the people who should lose their history, would either soon lapse into barbarism, or soon submit to a conqueror. Or, should they willfully forget or destroy their history, they must pass through a great political and social convulsion before beginning again to build the fabric of their national life and strength.

The strength of Roman greatness was sapped when the men of Rome began to forget the story of her power, her wisdom, and her glory, and the Roman nation perished when Roman history was ended, and her barbarous conquerors thronged the Forum and crowded the banks of Tiber, with a race who knew nothing of her heroic legends, and had never heard of her Consuls, her Tribunes, her Senate, her great Republic, and her mighty Cæsars. New and great nations were to spring from the loins of the invaders, but though her people and her seven hills still remained, old Rome was dead forever. And when the people of France, fiercely desperate, and drunk with excess of philosophical liberty, madly demolished in a day the work of centuries, tore down the throne of Henry IV, and Louis XIV, obliterated all the land-marks of their social and political history, and launched the State upon a treacherous sea of constitutional theories and political experiments, France lay faint with weakness, and gasping in the convulsive struggles of a mortal agony, until her First Consul, gathering in his hand the broken powers of the State, led her through a new history of bloody conquest, martial fame, and national power and glory, and, as the Great Napoleon, established his imperial dynasty. And to this dynasty the France of our day, after other experiments, and other failures, has again turned for refuge as to the only representative of history she has left, for the ancient history she can never recall.

As memory, therefore, is to the individual a true witness of his spiritual existence, so is history the true witness of a na-

tional life. It is a witness to whose testimony we must carefully listen, if we would understand not only the origin of a people, but the development of their national character, and the sources of their national institutions. For, it would be strange, indeed, if history, which laid the foundation, should take no part in raising the superstructure.

I have endeavored, on a former occasion, to show that all government is based upon individual power, and that nature, society and history are the great sources of power. If we examine the records of history, we will, I think, discover endless illustrations of its truth; and will find, in the striking language of Paschal, that "if the nose of Cleopatra had been shorter, the whole face of the world would have been changed." But we must never forget that, as two great contending hosts are hung in space, waging a deadly warfare, whose conflicts are told in the sublime music of Milton's glorious epic, or in the still more awful words of inspired Scripture, so among men two great classes contend for the mastery in society—the defenders of wholesome law, and the champions of selfish and unbridled license. And as the powers of evil present themselves in the brawny muscles, the fierce passions, and the hoarse clamors of depraved, selfish and ignorant men, so they can only be successfully encountered by the courage, the strength, the intelligence, and the energy of individual men—by the simple and the positive power of an actual presence. It is between these two contending forces that the moral law interposes, and by the instinctive awe of its presence, by its appeal to the reason, and by its control over the conscience, throws the weight of its authority and its strength into the scale of right, and assures a triumph to the advocates of truth and justice. Now, this office and power of the moral law is represented by institutions. And history is the source and evidence of custom; and custom is the strength of institutions. When the renowned John Selden was asked on what principle and maxim of the English Constitution did he rest the right to resist tyranny, "on the immemorial custom of Englishmen," was the reply. In this brief and pithy answer, he not only announced a fundamental maxim of the constitutional law of England, but a great principle of all constitutional history. For the authority of custom is of universal application, whether it is reduced to the form of written

law, or whether it stands only in history. That which has been once done, and well and successfully done, carries with it the intrinsic weight of precedent and example; and precedent and example repeatedly followed, acquires the force of custom; and customs, well known and long established, settle down into fundamental law; and fundamental law, of necessity, develops itself into institutions. For, what are institutions but law in action, law in habitual action? And it is because institutions are the representatives of unquestioned law, that they become the defences behind which the better, the higher, and the purer elements of society are rallied and organized, and from this vantage ground are able to repel the assaults of folly, ignorance and evil. As memory, therefore, is the source of habit to the individual, so is history the foundation of custom and the strength of institutions; and no wise or thoughtful man will overlook and undervalue this great boon of the past. The institutions of a people are like the language of a people, which, in itself, is nothing but a collection of articulate sounds, but which, by the force of custom and common consent, confirmed and established by the authority of genius, not only gives utterance to the thoughts and the feelings of one generation, but preserves and perpetuates the thoughts and the feelings of many ages. They are like the atmosphere, with no light in itself, but distributing light through all the spaces of nature. But, as the noble monuments which the genius of Greece has reared over her dead language may remind us that even the most exquisite language in which the speech of man was ever uttered, may die; and as the rising and the setting sun may admonish us that the light is not in the atmosphere, but that when the great fountain of light is withdrawn it shrivels into darkness, and all its brilliant power is gone, so may those grand themes of history, which treat of the rise and fall of empires, teach us that the essential life of nations is not in institutions, but in something higher, and deeper, and wider. And as the anatomist takes away limb after limb, which, as a physician, he would nurse and heal, and cuts his way through bone and muscle, down to the throbbing heart and the quivering brain, that he may find and explore the very seat and sources of physical health and life, so must we not undervalue institutions, but we must find our way beyond them to the vital powers of govern-

ment as they exist in all the simplicity of an individual intelligence, in all the dignity of an actual presence, and in all the warmth and sympathy of an actual humanity.

The Common Law of England, and the administration of justice in her courts, affords so striking and condensed an illustration of what I have been last saying of the power of individual men, the conflict of the social forces, the authority of the moral law, and the great office of history, that I cannot refrain from dwelling upon it for a moment. For what is the Common Law—that noble system of laws so wide and so strong in its power, so plastic in its structure, so pliant in its adaptation, so comprehensive in principle, so minute in detail; which invests the throne of the monarch with its prerogatives, and the imperial parliament with its privileges, and yet guards the meanest hut of the subject so that the king cannot enter it; which equally protects the liberties of the city of London, entrenched behind the battlements of ancient charters and immemorial usage, and shelters the humblest flower that blooms in the widow's garden and is watered by her hand? What is this Common Law but a priceless treasure, which has been amassed by the authority and power of English Judges, who have gathered the great principles of justice and law, as they lay like native ore in the instincts, the consciences and the customs of the English people, and stamping them with the royal image and superscription of judicial genius, have sent forth their judgments as the current justice of the realm, and the established standards of social and political right? The power of the English Judges is a power which has not only interpreted law, but in what is known to lawyers as judicial legislation, has made law, and in the notable instance of the fictions of “a fine and common recovery” for cutting off entails, actually repealed the Act, and defied the authority of parliament itself. And how do the questions arise which these judges decide, but in the conflict between right and wrong, justice and injustice, truth and error in society, as they are represented by their advocates within the bar, each the champion of his cause, and each with subtle power and unsparing determination grappling with his opponent, and hotly struggling for the victory? And, aside from their individual genius, what has given to the judges of England their power to expound and to make law, but her judicial institutions, that organization of her courts which preserves the independence of

the English Judiciary—that “immemorial custom of Englishmen,” to defend the sanctity and the independence of the English Bench? And what has preserved and transmitted to us the knowledge of this law, as it was expounded by its oracles, but the records of the court, writing when each new truth was questioned and by the ordeal rendered certain, each new principle of justice was ascertained, each new question of disputed right was decided, and each new rule of social and political conduct was determined? And this record is history.

These, then, are some of the great offices of history, and even from this partial and inadequate view, we may well conclude that history is truly the life of nations; that it is, indeed, that magnetic influence, passing from individual to individual, through all the limits of the State, which concentrates the energies and attracts the affections of a people, and with a power higher than the mountains, deeper than the rivers, sterner than the ocean, binds them together in the close ties of an active, national life, in the complete development of national institutions and national power, in the unavoidable responsibility of national character, to last as long as their history lasts, and to end when their history is closed.

And here arises a beautiful harmony between our individual and our social life. In the material world, the objects of our senses all deeply engage the affections, attracting and fascinating us, exciting our wonder and our admiration, stimulating our eager curiosity and our laborious care. The sweet face of woman, the beautiful play and the winsome ways of children, the fair scenes of nature, “the bright flowers and the glad grass,” the cloudy grandeur of the mountains, the solemn arch of heaven, and the majestic progress of the stars, all mysteriously stir the heart, and declare that the moral office of the senses is to call us out of ourselves, and to fix our thoughts and affections on some outward object of care and interest. They all attest that even in the world of sense, keen desire, and productive energy, and self-forgetfulness, and protecting care, and engrossing affection, are the genial and exhilarating atmosphere of a pure and elevated spiritual life. To this office of the senses do we owe the rise and progress of all the physical sciences; to this do we owe the pale enthusiasm and the gentle graces of the students of nature; to this the uncalculating heroism which has stormed the battlements of the icy king,

where he holds his court amid the frozen twilight of the furthest pole.

Now, what is done for us by the senses in the world of matter, is done by memory in the world of thought. For memory can weave a spell over the heart from which neither the lapse of time can carry us, nor all the fascinations of novelty nor all the wiles of beauty can allure us. Before

*"Its soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour,"*

the thoughts and the passions are bowed like reeds before the gale, and the spirit owns a despotic master. And as between sons of the same household

*"there blossoms up
From out a common vein of memory,
Sweet household talk and phrases of the hearth,"*

and all the gentle bonds of brotherhood; as from out the blended memories of parent and child there springs up the noble harvest of parental and filial love; as it is when we recall our own experience of Heaven's mercy and goodness, and rise on the wings of memory, along the heights of the inspired records, through "the years of the right hand of the most high," up to the very throne of God, that there steals over the spirit the ineffable light of the love of God; so it is by the blending our individual memories with the memory of our native land as preserved in her history, that there is born the generous love of country—an emotion which stands next to the love of God, and is in perfect harmony with it.

Thus have I endeavored to present a brief and inadequate view of a portion of the Philosophy of History. But the history of the world is a bewildering study. What mind can grasp its vast compass or explore its endless ramifications? The triangular survey of our single coast has nearly consumed the lifetime of its distinguished chief. Who shall undertake to make such a survey of the boundless coasts of the globe? The imagination faints, the power of conception fails, and philosophy is exhausted when we undertake the theme of universal history. Rather may each one turn to the history of his own country to find subjects enough for useful research and intelligent investigation. So let us turn to the history of South Carolina.

In that wonderful palace, where was held the exhibition of the industry of all nations, South Carolina occupied but an obscure corner of the splendid structure, and contributed little else that was worthy of note but a plain and simple bale of cotton. And yet as that familiar object greeted the eyes of the thoughtful traveler from our shores, not only was his spirit refreshed by gentle memories of the frugal life and the simple habits of our plantation homes, and by inspiring thoughts of the pure women and the noble men who have been gathered around their hearths, but he was also reminded of that conservative energy of our institutions and that admirable organization of our labor which has given to the world that great staple which has been crowned king of commerce, peace and plenty, whose saffron flower might well rank with the rose of England and the lilies of France, in the extent of its dominion and the potency of its sway, and the daily bulletins of whose royal progress are flashed on the wings of lightning, and hurried on the eager steps of steam to the remotest quarters of the civilized world, while anxious thousands crowd the marts of commerce and throng the world's exchanges, waiting to hear the tidings they shall bring. So may we find in the brief history of our State the development of great principles of national life and constitutional law, which may well engage our thoughts and arrest our earnest attention.

One reason, I think, why the early history of the State has not received a larger share of our interest and attention, is to be found in the fact that the most of those institutions which, as members of the Anglo-Saxon family, we chiefly value and cherish, are an inheritance from our English forefathers, and have been developed and elaborated upon English soil, and that on a grander theatre of action, and a larger scale of experiment, than could be embraced in the limits of our State histories. And hence English history has to a large extent engrossed the interest and the investigation of our scholars and statesmen.

But there are three great institutions, which have been the peculiar result of our history as a State, which will well reward a careful investigation. These are the Republic, the Institution of African Slavery, and the Sovereignty of the States which compose the American Union.

The history of the two first have been frequently and ably treated. Permit me, this evening, very briefly to investigate the

history of that Sovereignty of the States, which forms so striking a feature in the structure of our government, and one so little understood beyond the limits of our country, and to examine some of the causes which have produced it. In using the term, the Sovereignty of the State, I do not intend to suggest any question of controversy; neither is it necessary, nor is this the occasion to insist upon the technical accuracy of the language, in its political aspects.

By the Sovereignty of the State of South Carolina, I here only mean to designate that political individuality of the State for which she is indebted to the favor of no earthly power whatsoever, but which was the growth of her history and the conquest of her strength. I mean that political individuality which once existing and established, could only cease to exist by her voluntary action, or be lost by her conquest, and which there is no line of her history to show that she has ever voluntarily surrendered, or has ever been torn from her by the arm of the conqueror. I mean that political individuality which controls us in our nearest and dearest rights, and which wields the awful power of life and death over its citizens. I mean that political individuality which impersonates the august principles of social order and civil authority, so that the elementary processes of justice proclaim themselves the guardians of the peace and the dignity of the State of South Carolina. I mean that political individuality which alone exercises the wide and comprehensive power of eminent domain and territorial possession, so that the soil of the State is sacred from the footstep of the intruder, because her natural landmarks and her topographical monuments are inscribed with the name of the State of South Carolina. I do not disguise my own perfect conviction that the political individuality I have thus described is what the expounders of international law, from the time of Grotius to this day, have been pleased to designate by the name of the Sovereignty of the State. But I do not wish now to insist upon it. It is sufficient for my purpose if such a political individuality is admitted to exist, as has essentially aided to mould the face of society in the several States, and has exerted a powerful influence upon the administration of the Federal Government and the constitutional history of the country.

What, then, were the historical causes which led the colon

which, nearly two centuries ago, was planted upon the banks of the Ashley, to the position and the power of a Sovereign State?

First, then, I think it may be safely asserted, as a general truth of all the first emigrations to the various American Colonies, that they came emphatically to found States. They adopted naturally, as a matter of choice and necessity, the main body and the general features of the laws of the country from which they came. But still the States they came to found were to be States with new policies and new laws, vitally affecting the interests of society and the powers of government; or, if States with no essential modifications of the laws and the policy they left behind, at least States which, as distinct political communities, were to be rather the political appendages of the mother-country than its subject colonies, adding to her fame, her power and her commerce, but not subject to the full measure and the minute detail of her domestic law—owing her aid and allegiance, but expected from their position and their circumstances to exercise a large share of the privileges, and to feel a large share of the responsibilities of self-government. In most instances, this was either manifest on the face of the charter of each colony, or was the immediate motive of the emigrants themselves, or the direct policy of those who sent them. Even where this was not so clearly the case, the individual character and the exclusive policy of the neighboring settlements, confined the less distinctive colonies to their own limits, and compelled them also to develope and pursue an individual course of action. And the separate and independent origin of each settlement was calculated to increase and confirm this tendency to form individual communities and independent colonies. They came at different times under separate charters, to occupy separate grants made to separate men or combinations of men, with different motives, objects, policies and ambitions. Unless, perhaps, the evangelization of the heathen must be considered an object held in common, as it was certainly a motive universally and sanctimoniously professed, but a motive whose practical operation might well excite our merriment, if its hypocrisy—we hope its unconscious hypocrisy—did not make us sad. For the practical conversion of the Indians seems to have been prosecuted very much after the fashion recommended by the Rev. Jonas Stockham, a zealous missionary in Virginia,

who wrote to the Council in England : " I am persuaded if Mars and Minerva goe hand in hand, they will effect more in an houre than those verball Mercurians in their lives ; and till their priests and ancients have their throats cut, there is no hope to bring them to conversion."

The territorial grants, too, which defined the limits of the several colonies, were made to parties who stood between the colonist and the crown, and who were charged with the power and responsibility of conducting the settlers to their new homes, providing for their welfare, and prescribing the laws and the organization of each distant community.

The letters patent issued to Sir Humphrey Gilbert, for the settlement of Virginia, and repeated to Sir Walter Raleigh, " Vest in him, his heirs and assigns forever, the lands so to be discovered and possessed, with the rights, royalties and jurisdictions, as well marine as other, within the said lands and countries, and the seas thereunto adjoining." " And further grants to Sir Humphrey, his heirs and assigns forever, full power and authority to correct, punish, pardon, govern and rule as well in causes capital or criminal as civil, all such the subjects of the Queen, or others who should inhabit the said countries, with power to constitute such statutes, laws and ordinances as should by him, his heirs or assigns, be devised or established for the better government of the people."

What language could more clearly convey a command, and bestow authority to found and establish a State? And this first charter to Sir Humphrey Gilbert is a type of nearly all the charters subsequently granted; which, if they did not employ entirely the same language, were conceived very much in the same spirit. A spirit of independent action as States was thus infused into the organization of the colonies from their very origin.

But, to appreciate the full force of this idea, we must go back to the time of the first discovery of America, and realize for a moment the wonder and amazement, the eager curiosity and the intense excitement with which the people of the old world must have first heard the startling announcement, that a new continent had been discovered—a continent rich in gold, fertile in soil, and genial in climate, and so vast that innumerable States, like those they knew, might be carved out of its limits—that a new world was opened to enterprise and adventure.

How must their imaginations have revelled in dreams of the wealth and power such a land would bring to its possessors. How instinctively must they have felt that this wonderful land was to be the cradle of new States, the home of new nations, the seat of new empires.

We must also, to some extent, recall the condition of Europe after America was discovered. Ancient learning had just been revived; the art of printing had been discovered; the Reformation had begun; a higher and a better philosophy had been inaugurated; thought and inquiry had received a fresh impulse; the minds of men had been stimulated, their consciences had been aroused. The feudal system had been broken up, and its wrecks still strewed the face of Europe. Government was thus centralized, and its power established. The period of national segregation was slowly progressing, and the limits of States were, by degrees, being painfully ascertained with labor, with commotions, and with war. Governments were still rocking on their bases, and gradually settling down into their foundations. The consciences of men had not only been aroused by the Reformation, but were often arrayed against the governments which sought to control them. The powers of government and the duty of its subjects were everywhere debated; and everywhere, the State—its rights, its powers, and its duties—was the great idea which filled the minds of men, and agitated their thoughts. But, especially, must we recall the condition of England at this time. We must go back to the reign of her wise and heroic Queen, who gave the key-note to her court, when to her counsellors, who urged her to marry, she exclaimed: "I am married already, and England is my husband." We must catch the spirit that burned in the bosoms of that true knight of history, Sir Walter Raleigh and his kinsmen, those brave and generous soldiers, Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Richard Grenville, as they took counsel how to found an empire for their queen amidst the wealth and the wonders of the new world, which might check the power and balance the splendid conquests of the hated Spaniard. We must recall all that eventful period between the beginning of the Great Rebellion and the Revolution of 1688, with all its persecutions and its suffering, its social disorders and its political convulsions, and its great questions of liberty of conscience and constitutional right, when the blood of Englishmen was poured out like water, and men staked

their lives upon their political opinions and their religious creeds.

We must recall all these great elements of European and English history, if we would realize the spirit of the age which sent forth the men who founded the colonies of America, and gave them the character of States. It was an age of ambitious achievement and daring adventure, an age in which the minds of men had been deeply agitated, and society had been violently broken into parties representing every shade of political opinion, and into sects holding every variety of ecclesiastical doctrine. Well might the unbroken silence and the deep repose of the distant shores and the boundless forests of the new world, attract the thoughts of such an age. Its vastness gave assurance that there was room enough for all opinions and all creeds. Well then might the men of that day seek to settle, far away from the turmoil, the violence, and the opposition which harassed them at home, new States with which they might identify their names and their fame; new States in which they might try their political theories, or at least hold them in peace; new States where the fanatic might find the power he so wildly craved, and the persecuted might find the rest he so ardently longed for.

And it is from this estimate of the spirit of that age, that I am led to believe that, under whatever charter they might be collected, under whatever leaders they might be sent, it would be the instinctive conviction of every colonist as he left the shores of the old world, that he went as one of the founders of a State; and his first impulse, as it was his first necessity, would be to lend his aid to the construction of a new and distinct political community. And hence we may understand and account for the tenacity with which the colonies, in the very first days of their existence, clung to that simplest element of a State, the integrity of their territorial limits. It was the source of frequent disputes, jealousies, and contentions, and sometimes almost led to a conflict of arms.

Nor did South Carolina form any exception to this law of their emigration, which controlled the settlement of her sister colonies.

When the great soul of Coligny, oppressed with sad foreboding and prophetic anxiety, meditated a refuge for his Protestant countrymen, it was to some new State founded by them in the New World, that his thoughts turned for their asylum, and

it was to the shores of Carolina that he sent his first colony. Although Ribauld and Laudoniere have left no trace behind them but a name for the soil and a romantic fame for themselves, yet their expedition affords too correct an illustration of the spirit and the objects of the earliest settlements of the country, to be entirely overlooked. And, as if no earnest effort was to lose its reward, as if no generous prayer, no deep yearning of the human heart, was to go unanswered by Heaven, here, at last, after long years had passed, did the children of Coligny's beloved Huguenots find a refuge, and here have their children's children won honor and wealth, and the praise of a pure and unselfish life.

And when, at last, after the lapse of near a century, the English-colony came to the shores of Carolina, under William Sayle, they, too, came emphatically to found a State, with peculiar laws, with a local government and a recognized territory, and they came with a written constitution in their hands. The charter to the Proprietors of Carolina granted as ample powers as that to Sir Humphrey Gilbert I have already quoted. And they seem not to have been indisposed to exercise them to the fullest extent. Although it may be true, therefore, as has been so pithily and admirably stated by one, the clear philosophy of whose mind ever flows in a bright, and deep, and graceful stream of earnest thought, that "the settlement of South Carolina was begun as an investment,"* I think it is equally clear that it was an investment in a State, and that the profits of that investment were to accrue from the value which the prosperity, the population, the power, the social order, and the political success of the new State was to give to the wide domain of its proprietors.

The characters of the men who composed the company of her founders, is itself a still further guarantee that sordid gain was not the only motive of her settlement. It may have had its influence, and that a large one, as the desire of gold and of gain more or less mingled with the other elements of the emigration to all the colonies; but it was not the sole motive, and there was also something higher and better. Every one of the proprietors were men of talents, of great consideration, and commanding position. Two of them, especially, occupy a very prominent place in history. Shaftesbury and Clarendon were

*See Oration of W. H. Trescot before Historical Society, 19th May, 1859.

both scholars, philosophers and statesmen. The one was the author of the Habeas Corpus Act, the other was the author of the History of the Great Rebellion. Both had borne the burthens and the responsibilities of office. Both had experienced the embarrassments, the imperfections and the inadequacy of all existing government. The minds of both had, doubtless, long dwelt on conceptions of a more perfect government, and theories of a more perfect constitution. In the characters of both, then, I think we have ample assurance that, in the settlement of our State, its founders did not only engage in a commercial adventure, but also undertook a philosophical achievement. They not only sent their colonists to America with the fundamental constitutions in their hands, but in the obstinacy with which they persisted in requiring the colony to adhere to them, we have abundant evidence that these constitutions were not merely dictated by a capricious whim, or a passing fancy, but were part of a well-considered and deeply-cherished project, and one which was not to be lightly abandoned. They finally so disgusted the people of Carolina with their unreasonable demands, in this and in other particulars, that the colony rose in rebellion, and got rid of "fundamental constitutions," "new regulations," and proprietors themselves, all at a stroke. So our State, which in later days has been reproached as the land of political abstractions, was thus, in her earliest settlement, the scene of a political experiment. The experiment failed, and these famous constitutions were never observed, but they no less clearly demonstrate the proposition I have endeavored to maintain, that in common with the founders of all the other colonies, the proprietors of South Carolina undertook to establish a State. And this was the first cause of what we are considering, the present sovereignty of the State.

Another cause which contributed to the political individuality of the several colonies in their early history, is to be found in their "local circumstances;" a phrase which became well known afterwards in the disputes with England. It is not my purpose to investigate the "local circumstances" which led to our separation from the mother country. It is with the independence of the States of each other, and not with their independence of England, that we are now concerned. But as the local circumstances which separated us from the British empire might nearly all be embraced in the words "the broad

Atlantic," so might the local circumstances of their early history, which separated one State from another State, be comprised in the words "the trackless forest."

Each separate colony when it reached the wild and desolate coast, had to cut a space and foothold for itself out of the dense primeval forest—a forest which had already swallowed up more than one band of hardy emigrants, with the power and the silence of the sea, and leaving no more trace behind. On the side of the land this trackless forest, filled with scattered bands of cruel, fierce and treacherous savages, encompassed the colony on every side, and for a long time shut it up in a complete and absolute isolation. While on the side of the sea, ships were few, the coast was unknown, and navigation was difficult. Each colony, therefore, was compelled by necessity to pursue its own individual and peculiar policy, to follow the dictates of its own judgment in the administration of its public affairs, to look to its own courage, strength, prudence and vigilance to avert the dangers which menaced it, and to its own industry, frugality and enterprise, to provide the supplies which were necessary. So important do I consider the difficulty of communication between the colonies, as an effective cause in shaping the political individuality of the States, that I am inclined to believe that if this age of scientific invention had commenced two centuries ago, and the power of steam, crushing the strength of the forest under its iron heel, and dashing the grasp of the waves from its crest, had accompanied the first settlers to their new homes, we should never have witnessed that system of independent States which we now possess. And if our country, as the home of one section of the great Anglo Saxon race, is to play that great part on the theatre of history and in the progress of the world, which we sometimes, perhaps, too boastfully claim for her, then possibly it may not be irreverent or presumptuous to believe (I say it with hesitation) that in the wise providence of Heaven, these wonderful powers of modern science were withheld until the scheme of our confederated government was completed, and then given to the world to aid our progress and crown our career.

But a third, and perhaps the most powerful and efficient cause of the political individuality of the States, will be found in the distinct and independent history through which each colony was conducted. It bound the people of each colony

more closely among themselves, it separated them more entirely from their neighbors. Taking, for example, the history of our own State: it begun with the first hour in which they spread their sails for their long and dangerous voyage. And when they had found their haven and reached the shore, they were met by the uplifted tomahawk of the savage, and the deadly diseases of an untried climate, more fatal than the Indian's hatchet. They found themselves in a wilderness, far from home, surrounded by savage enemies, in a strange climate, on an unknown soil, with the giant forest before them, and little else to help them but the axes on their shoulders and the weapons in their hands. How quickly and sharply must the bonds of brotherhood have been welded? How much were they to each other, how little was all the rest of the world to them? And this was but a type of that which was to follow. For as the settlement was begun in loneliness, in difficulty, privation, anxiety and danger, so was it continued amidst weary labors, deadly sickness, sharp suffering, harrassing conflicts and incessant wars, encountered with the energy of a desperate courage, and borne with the patience of a necessary fortitude. These are the necessities which develope the powers of government, and these the circumstances which plant that government in the soil, and give to it a local life and character. And the government which these necessities brought into life and action, was called upon to exercise all the highest powers of sovereignty. They punished crime and administered justice, they imposed taxes and regulated trade, they made war and concluded peace with the Indians, they raised armies and fought battles with the Spaniards, they armed ships and captured prizes from the pirates, they made laws and created offices. All this, it is true, was done on a very narrow scale of action, but it was done with dignity and earnestness, with energy and persistence, and chiefly on their own responsibility and from their own resources.

Thus the history of the colony went on, growing wider in its extent and stronger in its power to unite and harmonize its people, up to the time when the proprietary government was abolished, and it entered upon a new career of activity, enterprise and prosperity under the immediate auspices of the Crown and Parliament. But the Crown and Parliament found a people deeply imbued by their history with the spirit of self-government and self-reliance—a people led by veterans in the perfor-

mance of public service, and in the administration of public law, who had borne the brunt of many a conflict and carried the scars of an honorable warfare—a people who would do them homage and pay them allegiance and give them affection, but would give them little of submission besides. Their firm temper and determined will—the life of a commonwealth within them—soon developed itself in another revolution, wider and deeper than the last, in which the rule of Great Britain was shaken off forever, the independence of the thirteen colonies was declared, and they stood before the world, both technically and practically, each a sovereign and independent State. As sovereign States they entered into mutual alliance. As sovereign States they waged the unequal conflict of the Revolution. As such they triumphed and came out of the conflict, with, indeed, a warmer affection and a broader sympathy for each other, with a higher sense of their obligations, and a better knowledge of their historical relations to each other, but with a consciousness of individual life, and a self-centered strength, deeper and stronger than before.

To state, then, in a few words, the result of this enquiry into the history of the sovereignty of the States, we may say that to these three great elements of our history—1. The original purpose of the founders of the colonies. 2. Their own local circumstances. 3. Their separate, distinct and independent histories—are we to trace this remarkable feature of our political structure. Minor causes will, upon examination, doubtless be found to have contributed to the same result; but these are the chief and the most important. As the result of these united causes, as I have endeavored to portray them, and as the special fruit of colonial times, do we have that rich product of our political history and that peculiar form of our national strength, the sovereignty of each confederate State, which is, I believe, the best, the most conservative, and the strongest institution we possess.

When the American Revolution was ended, and peace had begun, then came those august Conventions, those solemn deliberations and anxious debates, which issued in the adoption of the first Articles of Confederation and afterwards in our present Federal Constitution. And the establishment of the American Confederacy is the great epoch of our history. It threw a flood of light on the past; it sent its beams far into the future. As

the great Cathedral of modern Rome consumed, in building, many long years of weary toil and painful effort, and on some Carnival night a light is seen to glimmer at some dim point of the shadowy structure, and then another light flashes out, and another, and another, and now the swift flashes spring from point to point, from angle to angle, from arch to arch, from wall to roof, from roof to dome, from height to height up to the topmost ridge, and at last the wondrous pile stands grandly out, a living glory of sculptured light, so are there passages in history which seem to illuminate whole centuries of the past, and to bathe them in the glow of a mighty purpose; so, do I think, does the establishment of the American Confederacy on the basis of the sovereignty of the States seem to illuminate all the weary years of our early settlements and our colonial history, as years of which the grand conception of a powerful yet conservative confederation of sovereign and independent States is the sublime result.

And this law of our Colonial development has not only controlled the history of the original thirteen States, but like the law of crystalization in chemical substances, has been the law of our territorial accretion and our national expansion. After the Revolution, Maine, and Vermont, and Tennessee, and Kentucky, are soon admitted into the Union, with all the rights and privileges of the original States. When Virginia cedes her vast domain to the Federal Government, she annexes to her grant an express condition that it shall be formed into Republican States. When Texas is acquired by treaty, it is divided into States. When California is annexed by conquest, the flag of a State soon waves over its golden streams and its mines of treasure. And now, from the broad Atlantic to the bright Pacific, the crystal cleavage is fast shooting its lines of growth and power, across the dark spaces that intervene, is fast tracing out the limits of new States, and carrying with it the brilliant light of wholesome knowledge, individual intelligence, social strength, conservative institutions and a generous civilization, is fast shaping for the brow of the New World on its most fertile plains and amid its grandest scenes, a noble crown of wise, prosperous, and powerful States.

I have said that perhaps we might find in the brief history of South Carolina, the development of great principles of national life and constitutional law, which may well engage our

thoughts, and arrest our attention. And in the history of the sovereignty of the State, we find an illustration.

There is no more curious and instructive feature of the geography of the world, than its division into countries, kingdoms, states and empires, which are the homes of political communities, differing from each other as distinctly as one man differs from another, governing themselves according to their peculiar laws, and by their own social strength, and permitting no stranger to intrude into the administration of their affairs, or to violate the sanctity of their soil.

Now the law of social life which has developed the sovereignty of the States, is the same as that which has caused this segregation of nations and their self-government.

Leaving out of view the 'strong arm of conquest, they both proceed upon the great law of human sympathy. The sympathies of men do not reach beyond the pale of their common knowledge, their common welfare, and their common histories. Mankind have instinctively felt that it was not safe to take into their counsels those who could not sympathize with them, nor to entrust the powers of government to those who could not feel with them. And this instinct is based upon the broadest principles of a true philosophy. For the great qualification for counsel and for government is wisdom. And wisdom is the result of a comparison of knowledge. And there are large and precious stores of knowledge, which can only come by actual contact, and through the instincts and affections. As only he, therefore, who has actually stood upon the soil of a country, has traversed its plains, has followed the course of its rivers, and climbed its mountains, who has felt the breath of its climate, has walked under its suns and slept under its nights, can ever understand the true geography of a country, the character of its surface, the aspect of its scenery, and the qualities of its climate; so only he who has been rocked in the cradle of a country's institutions, who has had his hopes revived, his fears allayed, and his confidence established by their presence and their strength, can ever know their value; so only he who has stood in the actual presence of a people, has come into actual contact with their social condition, and has stood under the influence of their social agitations and their political movements, can ever understand the aspect of their affairs, the bearing of their progress, or the necessities of their history. As only the moth-

er can ever know the eager joy and unfathomable yearnings of a mother's love, so only the children of the soil can ever feel the mysterious magic of home and fatherland. As only he whose life has been strengthened and ennobled by the love of a mother, upon whose shoulder he has leaned his weary head for comfort and for counsel, and then gone to his work and to his duty, with his energies refreshed and his motives higher and purer, can ever understand the sheltering affection, the jealous carefulness and the holy wisdom of the heart of such a son. So only he who has strained his country to his bosom in a close and strong embrace, who has felt the throbs of her great heart, has held it so close that he could feel its slightest flutter and hear its softest murmur, has felt it beat fully and freely against his own, has felt it beat wildly and tumultuously with its unbridled impulses and its stormy passions, has felt it beat slowly, solemnly and grandly, with its wants, its hopes, and its affections, can ever know how to protect and serve and honor her. When strangers undertake the task their very kindness is cruelty, and their most elaborate wisdom the supreme folly.

It is this which makes the liberty of self-government, within the limits of our sectional interests, our social sympathies, and our political fellowship, the most precious of all liberties—that elementary liberty to which all nations have instinctively clung, and in whose sacred name so many crimes have been committed, so many follies have been perpetrated. This it is which makes the idea of “the solidarity of human rights,” so vauntingly proclaimed by the Hungarian orator, who not long since preached through our land a political crusade against the established governments of Europe, the craziest notion that ever troubled the brain of a dreaming enthusiast, or was coined into the phrases of a specious rhetorician. It is this which lifts the doctrine of non-intervention among nations, from the position of a mere maxim of political prudence, to the place of a great principle of historical law and international justice. And it is this which makes the sovereignty of the State so valuable an inheritance to us.

Thus, then, have I endeavored to trace the origin of the sovereignty of the State, and to suggest its importance. And as we are having a long talk together about the dear old Commonwealth, let us dwell for a moment upon two characteristics,

which I think may be justly claimed for her. One of these I would discuss for her defence; the other, I would mention for our own profit as an admitted fact of history. When in the political controversies which have arisen in the country, the arguments of the State, as represented by the advocates of her principles and the defenders of her interests could not be answered, she has been met by the easy sneer that she deals in abstractions. And yet if there is any quality more prominent than the rest in her history, it is her strong common sense. I do not mean to insist that this quality has been displayed in all the details of her minor legislation, for this would lead to endless dispute; but I mean that in all the great questions of constitutional law, political organization and social policy, which have arisen out of her domestic government and her federal relations, this quality of a strong common sense has been most strikingly manifested. For what is common sense? It is called common sense, not because it is a common possession of common men; not because it appeals to the vulgar motives and the meaner rules of conduct, which, with a biting sarcasm, such a definition would imply are the common motives of mankind. But it is so called, because as it refers to statesmanship, it is the application of the modes of reasoning, and the rules of conduct which we apply to the affairs of common life—to the solution of the great problems of political action and social law. It is that faculty of the mind which with the swiftness and power of an electric current reduces a question to the original elements which enter into its construction, examines with searching tests their nature and their affinities, and promptly returns the answer which solves the difficulty. It is the endowment of a mind of such width and strength, as to be able to carry in its thoughts the complicated and comprehensive principles of public law and national action, as easily and as steadily as we carry in our minds the rules and the maxims of common life. It is the habit of a mind which is so constantly and clearly familiar with the great laws and principles of moral and political science, that it instinctively flashes through the intricacies of a question of practical legislation or public conduct, and with scarcely the consciousness of a process of reasoning, forms its judgment and decides its course. It resembles the poetic faculty in the swiftness and power of its analysis and the clearness of its perceptions, but it differs from it in this: that while

the poet constructs the conceptions of his genius by the standards of his ideal world, the statesman of common sense builds with the rude and imperfect materials of practical life. The poet builds as he wills, the man of common sense builds as he can. They both employ the same powers, but they are occupied with different subjects. They both analyze to the same principles, but they use them for different purposes. As in common life not one, but many considerations and many motives combine to determine our daily conduct, so the statesman of common sense views every question in its concrete combinations and its varied relations, and determines his action with a wise and liberal regard to every element which should occupy his attention and receive his care. The short-sighted in common life, and the sciolist in politics, are constantly governed by motives of temporary expediency and a casual convenience and profit. The man of strong common sense, both in private and in public life, perceives the more remote as well as the immediate consequences, and will not sacrifice the benefit and the blessing of a great principle for a momentary gain.

The term "mere abstractionist," as commonly understood, is another name for ignorance and prejudice. The statesman of common sense, is a man of comprehensive thought and liberal knowledge. His mind is full of abstractions, but he combines them and applies them to the purposes of a practical wisdom and a large benevolence. In short, common sense in public life is that political sagacity which has given to us the great names of history, and achieved for us the great triumphs of national power and constitutional liberty. It came down to us from our English ancestors, and there is no feature of English philosophy, literature and politics, which stands out more boldly than that strong common sense which permits and requires active, vigorous, profound, and, above all, earnest, thought and speculation, but which confines these within the limits of our knowledge and our comprehension, and applies them to the purposes of a practical wisdom. It is this admirable quality thus understood, which, notwithstanding the sneers of her opponents, I claim for the political action of South Carolina from the time when her people obstinately set aside the philosophical intricacies of Locke's Fundamental Constitutions, and would have nothing to do with them, to the time when she established the wise and conservative compromises of her State Constitution, which have been

so eminently successful ; to the time when she engrafted upon her society the wholesome strength of the Common Law, and secured the independence of her judiciary, to the time when she maintained the practical wisdom and the common justice of free trade, and insisted upon the historical fact of the sovereignty of the States.

The other characteristic of the State, to which I have alluded as an admitted fact of history, which it would be profitable for us, especially at this time, to remember, is the testimony of her whole history, that no statesman has won fame, and honor, and power, in South Carolina, who has not only been distinguished for the commanding powers of his intellect, and the unblemished integrity of his public life, but also by a calm and self-respectful dignity, and a simple and unsophisticated earnestness, neither contaminated by a restless vanity, nor disfigured by an intemperate violence ; and all this relieved and adorned by a frank courtesy and a generous forbearance, which can encounter the honest blows of a brave adversary without loss of temper, as well as without loss of strength, and which recognizes in his opponents, not the enemies of himself, but the advocates of their principles and the champions of their cause, and refuses to cross swords with them on any other terms, or to permit the controversy to be brought down to any lower level. Men of other natures may, at times, have acquired a temporary notoriety and a local reputation, but they have never won the heart of the State, nor gained her loyal confidence. Look at the long list of her worthies—I need not repeat their familiar names—they will all bear the test.

But in order that we may receive a fuller and a clearer impression of these rare qualities which I have claimed for the public men of South Carolina, let me select two names, not because they are pre-eminent, but because I have felt especially drawn towards them, and because their memory will be grateful to you. They both belong to a generation that is fast folding its arms to rest in the grave. One of them has long slept the sleep of the just ; the other has just gone to his honored rest. Let us recall the names of Robert Y. Hayne and William C. Preston.

I need not say to you, that Mr. Hayne was a bright example of all the best qualities of our public men ; that his life was pure, and his intellect clear, vigorous and commanding ; that as

he was energetic, firm, and enthusiastic, so was he frank, generous, patient and courteous. His public life comprises a period of the most intense political excitement in the State, yet through all its storms, these great qualities shone brightly out. His mind and his character were both eminently practical; and as the most prominent feature of his character was an "ardent, zealous and uncalculating" devotion to duty, so was he able to present the reasons and the considerations which had satisfied his own mind with a clearness and a force of argument which carried conviction to others, and with a beauty of language, an eloquence of expression and a gallant enthusiasm, which warmed and delighted his hearers. He was one of the handsomest men of his day, and no one who has seen him will easily forget the bright and beautiful smile which beamed from his eye and played in the lines of his lips, nor the outlines of that noble brow marked with the lines of patriotic anxiety, but with no trace of unworthy passion or selfish care on its lofty front. Long will I remember the last time I saw him in life, sitting among our professors on the platform of the old college chapel. His presence that day among the youthful students of the State, seemed to me like the cool evenings of spring, and the memory of his life like the fruitful showers of summer, which bring the glad harvests of autumn. His memory should, I think, be peculiarly dear to the people of South Carolina; for he was her faithful representative and her loyal champion in the hour of her sorest trial and her greatest need. It should be proudly cherished by the city of Charleston, not only because he was her own son, but because in his declining years he put off the robe of the senator, and the honors of the executive, to become her first mayor, and lent a dignity and a grace to the office, which it has never since lost. His memory should be especially grateful to the women of South Carolina, not only for the pure and gentle graces of his domestic life, but because all who remember to have heard him speak, must remember with what graceful eloquence and knightly tenderness it was his wont to appeal to "the fair daughters of Carolina." It was a favorite passage in all his public addresses, and it seemed as if he desired to invoke the purity and the gentleness of woman to preside over the ruder conflicts of political life, and to attest that the bearing of every combatant was the bearing of a true knight, that every blow was fairly delivered, and every lance was gal-

lantly broken. I have paused to pay this tribute to the memory of Robert Y. Hayne, because his name was blended with my earliest dreams of the hero and the orator; the thought and the experience of maturer years has not dimmed the pure and soft light which surrounds his memory.

And looking up from the grave of Hayne, our eyes but yesterday might have rested upon the noble form of William C. Preston, bowed, indeed, with the infirmities of age and the inevitable sorrows of life, but still recalling the days of his power, when the listening Senate hung upon his words, and the multitude was swayed by his eloquence. To-day he lies in the majesty of death. He, too, during a life which has just come to its close, was a noble representative of the highest qualities of Carolina statesmanship. I think we are apt to underrate his powers of argument in our admiration of his vivid imagination and his brilliant rhetoric. His reasoning was not conceived according to the forms and the methods of an elaborate analysis and a strict logical deduction, but he drew such vivid pictures of things, men and events, in their natural order and according to their true relations, that his hearers for themselves caught the idea upon which he wished to insist, and arrived for themselves at the conclusion to which he wished to bring them. But it is as her great orator that the State is justly proud of him. And to estimate his power as an orator, we must not confine ourselves to his powers of argument; but we must recall, also, the nervous magnetism of his nature, and all the elements of his unrivalled action; we must recall the quivering muscles, the tremulous lips, the cloud and the sunshine of his brow as his face was swept by the "shadowy gust" of passion; we must recall that noble form, now lifted to its majestic height and swayed by emotion, like some grand oak with its branches rocking in the gale, now bending with the pliancy of the willow, to the attitudes of eager persuasion and pathetic appeal, until it seemed as if "his very body thought;" we must recall that glorious voice, now clear and strong as an organ's swell, now full and soft as woman's gentlest speech, while every word was wrapped and penetrated by a tone like the rich clash of stricken silver,—the tremulous agitation of a deep and full emotion. We must recall all these physical gifts, as well as his intellectual endowments, if we would realize the power of his oratory in the day of its strength and in the hour of its inspiration, when it was

borne forward on some wave of thought, which, reaching deeper and rising higher than its fellows, gathered energy and power as it rose, flashed with a snowy crest of gorgeous language, and broke in a glorious burst of eloquence, which swept all lighter objects from its path, and thundered against the bulwarks of the stoutest opposition, and hotly wrestled for the mastery, and tried all the strength of its material. But though his conceptions were bold, his thoughts earnest and vigorous, and his language passionate and almost impetuous, he never, for a moment, lost the beauty and the grace of a courteous, frank and generous nature. And now, in the solemn chamber of death, what generous heart will remember aught but his great gifts and his noble services, what voice will not be lifted to crown him with the State's honor and affection, and to ask for peace and blessing upon his name and memory !

Such, then, have been some of the characteristics of the sovereignty of the State, and such the men by whom they have been illustrated. And now, if this sovereignty of the State has been of any value to us in the past, if it has been that institution which has made the successful government of this confederacy possible at all, and if we look to it in the future as a safeguard of our rights, and as the strongest bulwark of our interests and our institutions, we must make ourselves masters of our State history, we must fill our minds with the knowledge of its details, we must become deeply imbued with its spirit of independent responsibility and self-reliant strength.

The most interesting passage of prophecy, is that which reveals the destiny of the scattered tribes of Israel, and the most wonderful fact in the history of races is the wide dispersion and yet the complete unity of the Jewish people. And when Heaven would employ a human agency to work this miracle of modern times, and would set apart a people to be the ark of its prophecies and the priests of its crowning promise, who should be scattered among all nations, yet mingling with none, he conducted them through a long and eventful national life, and gave them a magnificent body of history, which was to be the bond of their union and the badge of their race. And at this day the sublime history which recounts the meek wisdom of Moses, the uncalculating courage, the devoted faith and generous loyalty of Joshua, the glory of her Judges, the story of her Ark, and the splendor of her ancient Temple, the awful utterances of her

Prophets, and the solemn chants of her Royal Poet, is still the spell over scattered Israel, which has made them citizens of the world, yet one nation, which has kept the purity of their race unblemished by contact with other nations, and their blood uncorrupted by admixture with any people, waiting for the appointed time, and for the work they were chosen to do. While the Christian Church, too, feels this bond of union, and she, too, draws a full tide of inspiration from the grand memories of her elder sister, and with a higher and a purer faith, she, too, waits for the time when the elder branch, which was cut off that she might be grafted in, shall swell with the sap of new life, shall lift its branches to heaven and spread them wide over the world, and shower down upon the earth the lavish fruits and blessings of restored Israel. And so must our State history be the strength of our State life, and the bond of its citizenship. It is an inheritance which has come down to us, either to squander and neglect, or to cherish and preserve. If it is of any worth to us, we must accept it heartily and understand it thoroughly.

But there is a result of historical study which reaches deeper and touches us more nearly as individuals. I suppose there is no thoughtful man who has not at times been oppressed by a sense of the feebleness and insignificance of his individual life. The warring elements of nature overwhelm him, the upheavings of evil dismay him, and the commotions of society and the convulsions of governments confound and bewilder him. While from all the voices of nature and from all the stories of life comes the sad refrain, "We are passing away." The work before us is boundless, our life is brief, and our strength is as nothing. But when we go back to the sources of our history and the origin of our country's life; when we watch the march of events as they first begin their feeble progress, and then look as they recruit their ranks, and stretch their lines and crowd the spaces, and listen as the steps of their progress are heard quicker and firmer, and the music of their movement first faintly reaches the ear, and then louder and clearer swells upon the breeze, and the whole army of events is upon us, with their banners floating on the wind and their arms gleaming in the sun, and we stand in the present amidst the results of the past—results of civilization, results of philosophy, results of science, results of war, results of peace, results of civil commotions and constitutional

triumphs—it is then that we feel ourselves but companions of the mighty host of the servants of Heaven, and the sense of our insignificance is gone, and we turn to the duties of the day and the work of the hour with energy and with cheerfulness, with a brighter hope and a deeper and stronger confidence. And as, amidst all the violence of the elements, amidst desolating storms and burning heats, and blasting cold, man, by the prerogative of his reason and the power of his intellect, stands next to the Creator and master of nature by his knowledge of nature; so, amidst the shock of nations and the convulsions of empires, does the reverent student of history, by his submissive perception of the laws of life, and by his intelligent sympathy with the great Arbiter of destiny, stand master of fate by his knowledge of Providence.

In view, then, of all these considerations affecting us as citizens and touching us as individuals, who will not join us in studying and preserving the history of our State? Who will not sit down with us at the feet of our venerable mother, and listen, as from her records she tells of her trials and her triumphs, as she recalls the noble deeds that were done and the wise words that were spoken in the olden time—as with lingering memories she recounts the names, and with fond affection shows to us the life-like portraits of those favored sons who have been to her the crown of her honor and the right arm of her strength, and who, without passing the limits of truth or of modesty, we may say have made her history illustrious, inasmuch as America has occupied no mean place among the nations of the earth, and the State of South Carolina, through the genius of her statesmen and the activity of her sovereignty, has exerted no mean influence over the history of America.



